

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 51.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1854.

PRICE 1½d.

A CURIOUS EXPERIMENT AT LEEDS.

It is sometimes remarked slightly of the operative classes, that they are bad business-men, and usually quarrel and fail in any concentrated effort for their own benefit. It is not always so, and cannot necessarily be so, if we may judge from a remarkable show of administrative ability which they have made within the last few years in the town of Leeds. The facts, as they have reached us, and assuming their truth, are certainly of a nature to encourage hopefulness as to the power of working-people to help themselves in various ways.

During the scarcity of 1847, when flour was of course dear in Leeds, and believed by many to be largely adulterated, it was suggested by some active spirits, that an effort ought to be made to take the business out of the hands of millers and traders, the consumers purchasing the grain, and grinding and distributing it among themselves. So far as we can learn, to secure the good quality of the article was more a leading object than to save on the price. A number of persons, contributing each a small sum towards capital, attempted to purchase a mill for themselves, and, after some difficulty, obtained a flax-mill, which they converted into one for flour. They had many troubles and obstructions at first, in the unsuitableness of their mill, the inexperience and contrariety of opinions of their committee of management, and the state of the law, which did not then allow them protection for any transaction beyond the range of the members; so that, for example, they had the disadvantage of seeing six hundred bags of unsold bran upon their hands at once. But there were some manful and sagacious spirits amongst them, who thought they saw their way to success, and were anxious to give their scheme a full trial. Notwithstanding, then, a small loss on the first year—amounting, however, only to L.77 upon a total of L.4086 of business done—the society was enabled to persevere, till it had gained such a footing as happily put failure out of the question.

The plan seems to have been exceedingly simple, and such as could be easily realised in any large population, regarding any of the most generally used articles of merchandise. With the aid of a few persons accustomed to business arrangements, the general board of management, in its various sub-committees, was able to conduct the mill, purchase grain, and arrange for the distribution of the flour among the members, and the collection of the money. The money was in reality deposited before the flour was given out, certain shopkeepers being willing to do this, in order

to have the employment of the distribution, which was useful to them, not merely for the allowance they derived on account of their trouble, but because they thus secured a certain attraction to their shops.

The design at starting was to sell, or rather distribute, at a rate as near prime cost as possible. They simply added to the cost of the grain a charge for grinding, and then, allowing 1s. 6d. for the distributor's remuneration, struck the price to members, which was always considerably under the retailer's ordinary prices. It was found, for example, that while these individuals sold flour at 4s. per stone—which was the case when wheat was 90s. per quarter—the society's price was 3s. 9d.; or when flour was 2s. 3d. in ordinary shops (wheat being 50s. per quarter), the society's rate was 2s. 1d.; and so on in proportion. The saving was not at an invariable rate; but, on the whole, it was quite enough to be of importance. We are told that from October 1847 to July 1851, being 196 weeks, it was 37 weeks at market-price, 114 weeks 1d. below that rate, 38 weeks 2d., 5 weeks 3d., and 2 weeks 4d. per stone below the average. The quantity of flour actually sold was 848,261 stones—about 4124 per week—besides undressed flour; and the entire gain or saving of the members was estimated at L.3660, supposing that equal quantities were sold at equal rates of saving. The real fact, however, being, that the quantity sold when the reduction was 2d. or 3d. greatly exceeded that when it was at 1d., the actual saving must have been much greater. At the same time, it is important to remark, the grain bought was of superior quality—usually from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per quarter above the prices given for the wheat sold in common shops.

In July 1851, when the business done amounted to about L.27,000 per annum, with a surplus to the society of only a few hundreds on each of these periods, they so far changed their plan as to begin selling to the public avowedly for a small profit or reserve, applicable of course to the general benefit. After this, their affairs appear as more than ever flourishing. The amount of business in 1853 reached the large sum of L.69,422, with a clear profit of L.4387. And, at a balance last July, it appeared that the society's profits, or excess of receipts over outlay, were not less than L.7599. Out of this surplus, they have returned the sum of L.4066 in bonuses to members—an insignificant sum to each, and which, we think, might have been better reserved for the extension of the objects of the society, but which at least is valuable for the proof it affords that the concern has accomplished its primary objects, of giving the members a superior quality of article below market-prices, and secured a profit besides.

The remainder of the balance in favour of the society rests in sunk capital. They have a large fire-proof mill, with twelve pair of stones, and all other needful machinery in good repair; certain other buildings, and six carts and horses. There are about 3200 members; and there is a weekly turn-out of about 400 bags of flour, of 20 stones each, besides inferior meals. It is interesting, though not surprising, to learn that the working-expenses per bag have been undergoing a constant abatement, as the business of the society has increased. Originally 2s. 4d. per bag, they are now reduced to about 1s. 8d., the entire outlay of the society being thus covered. It is evident that this result is purely owing to that combination or co-operation which allows of the business being conducted on a large scale, and with an unusually small amount of unproductive outlay. Where a private trader's cart is carrying one bag of flour to some customer, the society's cart will be seen conveying a dozen. Where a miller has to be constantly changing his quality, and trying experiments, the society, using but one quality, turns its machinery to a greater account. Where the miller has to give credit, and often loses, the society realises beforehand every penny of its money, and practically never has had a bad debt. The principal economy, however, lies in the mode of distribution. The ordinary retailer cannot live with a smaller profit than 3s. per bag of 20 stones; this because his sales are of small extent. But the society's shopkeepers, attracting custom by the advantageous terms on which they offer this leading article, are satisfied with half that rate of profit. It is estimated that the society gains or saves £.40 weekly by an economy of distribution, which is quite impossible where traders are left to compete with each other, puffing, cheating, scrambling for customers by giving undue credit, and making a bad life for themselves out of it all.

A member of the society belonging to the trading-class takes a sanguine view of its capabilities, which we may receive or not as we choose. He says: 'Had the members generally consented to support the board, we might have doubled our capital, and trebled our profits, while yet paying no more than a "living profit" upon the cost of good corn for pure flour. If, instead of taking the bonus, they had extended the mill to supply other places, where our flour would gladly have been received, or if they had agreed to supply themselves with groceries and meat in the same way as they have done flour, not £.3000, but £.10,000 might easily have been gained. With an increased income, they might have built good houses to replace the inferior ones now so much complained of, paying only 5 per cent. rental, instead of the 10 which is customary. There might have ultimately been means of educating the young and pensioning the old, making poor-laws next to an obsolete thing in our district. Great moral improvements might thus have been brought about; indeed, as it is, some change for the better may fairly be said to have taken place, the conduct of our members being decidedly of a superior cast. I refrain from indulging in further speculations in this direction, lest I be thought over-sanguine; but I may remark, in conclusion, that the most hopeful, whose pictures of good were laughed at at the outset, never suggested results equal to what we have realised.'

Assuming, as we before said, the facts to be correctly stated, and we have every reason to believe such to be the case, they must be admitted to go some way in favour of those modified views of the competitive principle which have latterly been spoken of with favour by John Stuart Mill. It does fully appear that, in this instance, it has been possible to economise in the distribution of a particular article amongst a large and dense population by combination. It is at the same time proper to remark, that this is only one of the rivals which competition has to compete with,

and if there were not private dealing here also in the field, the Leeds Co-operative Flour-mill Society might become a tyranny, instead of a widely diffused benefit.

We rather think that the most interesting result is, after all, the proof afforded that it is possible for working-men to combine to great ends for their own benefit, without offence to either moral or political principle. Overlooking a few troublesome and loquacious members, the management is described to us as having been generally good and wise, as the results have been satisfactory. It cannot be doubted that, in thus training themselves to independent action, they are doing the best thing in their power to raise themselves as citizens, and improve the status of their class.

THE 'MOP.'

A RURAL SKETCH.

I AM rusticating in the country just now, according to my annual custom, and have taken up my residence with old Farmer Armstrong, who, and whose forefathers, have farmed their own land, situated in the heart of a midland county, any time these two hundred years at least. I have spent some glorious days of the true Wordsworthian sort, 'some of those lovely days that cannot die,' in wandering, sketch-book in hand, over hill and valley within sight of the great Cotswold ridge, among the winding lanes, between hawthorn-hedges twenty feet high, and by the banks of noisy little brooks which run, dashing and cascading it, on their way to the lower levels of the Churwell, on the Thames.

This morning we have the promise of another calm and cloudless day, although it is the 1st of October; and while discussing an early family-breakfast—a ceremony which is never at Armstrong Lodge slurred over in that heretical style which is common in London—I am wondering in what direction I shall sallie forth for new discoveries. Farmer Armstrong suggests that, as to-day is the day for the annual celebration of Overtopping Mop, and as he must go there to hire a new ploughman and a new dairy-maid, I may as well take a seat in his dog-cart, and drive over along with him. I am of that opinion too; and, accordingly, no sooner is full justice done to the breakfast before us, than forth comes the dog-cart and the bay mare, and I mount by the side of the farmer for a run to Overtopping, standing on the summit and partly on the side of a hill which we can see plainly enough at the distance of about ten miles. On we go, over a capital cream-coloured road, owing to the long drouth, as hard as granite, across which the wayside tree-shadows dance and flicker in the sunshine; through cosy little hamlets, where rose-trees in full flower climb to the thatch of the roofs; and past solitary farm-steads, where the gabble of troops of lazy geese puddling in muddy ponds, mingled with the thump, thump of the flail, are the only sounds that reach us. But as we draw within a few miles of Overtopping, we come up with some characteristic indications of what we may expect to meet with on our arrival. There are parties or individuals travelling towards the Mop, all with the express purpose either of business or recreation, and the majority perhaps with the hope of combining both in one. There are groups of labouring-men, clad in their neatest garb, and evidently, though in their working-suits, touched off with an air of trim tidiness not generally observable even on holiday occasions. As we rattle past them, they politely give us the 'good-day.' Some of them, I observe, have lengths of whip-cord twined round their hats, and these, the farmer informs me, are expecting to be hired as carters; some have made temporary hatbands of wisps of straw, which look as queer to the eye of a citizen as the mythical Dick's, and these seek engagements as ploughmen. Then there are groups of laughing girls, in bright-coloured cotton

gowns, snowy kerchiefs, and rosy faces, forming a very pleasant sight indeed, and filling the air with frolicsome sounds. Then there are solitary peddlers, plodding their weary way with stout packs on their backs and sturdy staves in their hands; and here and there a belated showman, whose rickety equipage, drawn by a starved donkey, or perhaps a couple of them, has foundered on the way, is seen urging his incapable team on their fitful march.

Arrived at Overtopping, we put up at an old-fashioned inn, standing upon the edge of the common which skirts the lower part of the town, and upon which the Mop is held. The main business of the Mop, as the reader will have anticipated, is the hiring of servants—farm-servants principally, though by no means exclusively. According to a custom which seems immemorial, servants of the hard-working grade in this part of the country seldom if ever hire themselves for a longer term of service than a single year. At the end of the prescribed period, they are accustomed to throw up their engagements, irrespective of any other motive than the desire for change, and the uncertain prospect of a change for the better. Of course this strange mode of proceeding is not universal, as numbers are found who have the sense to know when they are well off, and remain in one service from year to year; but it is so far general as to render the Mop a permanent institution, and, for want of something better in a district which, though covering a large surface, is almost exclusively agricultural, a necessary one. The proceedings of the day are divided into two portions—business and pleasure; and the admonitory old maxim, 'Business first, and pleasure afterwards,' is the regulating law.

The servants wishing to be hired take up their station as soon as they arrive on what they call 'the Staty,' which is a portion of ground allotted by the statute legalising the Mop for that purpose. As early as ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, they may be found ranged in position in two ranks; the men on one side, and the women on the other—each and all, as might be expected, looking their best. My thrifty host is not willing to lose time in so important a business, but, anxious for the pick of the market, sallies forth to make his election as soon as the bay mare is comfortably provided for and dinner is ordered.

On approaching the ground, which is thronged by a crowd far more dense and numerous than I expected to see, our ears are assailed by a sonorous booming, boo-ing, buzzing hum, which takes the shape of some melody not altogether unmusical, which we seem to recollect without being able to identify. It pauses at intervals, and then the gabble and tumult of the crowd, rising into uproar, leaves you in doubt whether the booming that puzzled you was anything but an illusion; but anon it commences again, and this time nearer, and there is no mistake about it; the tune is *Polly put the Kettle on*, but the instrument—it is impossible to guess what that is. Pushing our way through a labyrinth of gingerbread-stalls, of raree-shows, of quack doctors' establishments, of conjurors' booths, of extemporised shop-shops, of travelling theatres, and all the enlightening etceteras of a country fair, we come at length upon the Staty, and my good friend the farmer, with an eye to business, begins his scrutiny. I see that there is an expression of disappointment on his honest face: the Staty is not half filled—the labour exhibition is a meagre one—men-servants are at a premium, because they are scarce this year; the Baltic fleet and the Eastern levies have thinned the supernumerary ranks, and those that remain are consequently all the more costly. Worst of all, there are a more than usual number of bidders upon the ground, and serviceable flesh and blood is looking up. It is an amusing study to watch

the looks and motions, the cautious and solemn expression of face with which certain middle-aged ladies are bringing their phrenological acumen to bear upon the important decision which will so forcibly affect their domestic comfort for the next twelvemonth. Still more amusing are the sage precautions of some of the farmers, who, looking at the thing solely in an economical point of view, take the oddest measures to secure a good bargain. One would think that looks and speech were means sufficient to test the merits of a ploughman; but yonder bluff yeoman is not of that opinion, for he handles the candidate for his service much as we have seen a butcher in Smithfield Market handle an ox which he was going to lead off to the shambles. He feels the muscles of the man's arms, spans his wrist, and surveys his build from top to toe, doubtless reckoning up in his mind the amount of work that may be got out of him, not without an eye, perhaps, to the quantity of food the fellow may require to keep him in condition. Neither the farmers nor the matrons appear to be in any great hurry to come to a decision, and the ladies especially, I observe, act with an amount of deliberation that threatens to defeat its own purpose. One by one, however, both young men and maidens, step forth from the ranks, and withdraw with their prospective masters or mistresses to the parlour of the nearest public-house, or to some other convenient privacy, to adjust the terms of the bargain which is to cement their union for the next twelve months. The whole business is pretty well over by one o'clock in the day; and before this hour has struck, Farmer Armstrong, having engaged a dairy-maid, is closeted with a ploughman, with whom it is plain enough that he intends to come to terms. I am not much interested in the compact, and so I leave them to settle it between themselves while I take a further survey of the Mop.

Business being now almost finished, the secondary object of pleasure can be attended to. By the time the Staty is cleared, the Mop has degenerated into a country fair; the clown is roaring and grimacing in company with a bevy of painted damsels on the platform of the travelling theatre; a dozen ponderous voices are heard thundering through huge trumpets from different parts of the ground, calling the ladies and gentlemen to their brilliant entertainments—said ladies and gentlemen being the hired servants, who, having engaged themselves for the ensuing year, make a carnival of the remaining hours of this their day of liberty. It is the fashion, in concluding the bargain with their employers, to receive earnest-money by way of binding the agreement. The earnest-money may be a few shillings; and this, as a general rule, is spent at the Mop, at which a round number of the peripatetic showmen of the kingdom are pretty sure to be present. On this occasion, the concourse is unusually great, and the uproar is astounding—the bang of drums, the clang of cymbals, the bray of trumpets, the shrieking of hoarse clarionets, the yells of the clowns, and the responding chorus of giggling laughter, all together make a perfect Babel, amid which the clamour of individual spokesmen bawling for special notice and patronage, is almost hushed into silence.

'Did you ever see a crocodile?' screams close to my ear a voice already split into irredeemable shreds—'Did you ever see a crocodile? No, you didn't!—Very well; then here he is. This way, ladies and gentlemen—'

Just arrive,
To be seen alive,
A young crocodile,
From the banks of the Nile!

Then up goes the trumpet to his mouth, and through it rushes a diabolical combination of scream and roar,

which sends me flying from the den of the crocodile as though the monster himself were at my heels.

'Do you wad to see berit, ladies ad gedtleben, real berit? because if you do, this here's the place—Here you will see Seedyer Slubpini, what breaks stodes with his fist—That's what I call real berit, ad doe boodshide—You'll see hib do it—it's odely a peddy—ad he'll break a stode weighd fourted powds with his bare fist—You'll see it weighd, ad you'll see hib do it—That's real berit—dot a passel o' crokodiles ad beasts, ad stuff, ad paidted faces—but real berit—ad it's odely a peddy.' Thus gabbles another worthy, with a rapidity of utterance which must have cost him years of practice, as well as choked up his nasal channels.

Here stands a man in the costume of Charles I. when he mounted the scaffold, with sable hose, flowing cloak, pointed beard, and Vandyke collar. He speaks in high-flown language, styles himself a professor of toxicology, and calls upon any of Her Majesty's subjects who are suffering from disorders of any kind, to apply to him at once for a cure of their grievances, ere he shall have vanished from the neighbourhood and it is too late. The fellow has really a fine picturesque head, and though his style is inflated, his grammar is unexceptionable, and one cannot help wondering what has brought him to the condition of a medical mountebank. He has an ally in a motley-coloured fool in cap and bells, who has the charge of the cash department, and who keeps the crowd amused by a succession of odd jokes and villainous contortions of countenance, expressive of the powerful effects of his master's medicine. It is whispered, however, that the fool is the proprietor, and that the solemn-looking professor of toxicology is but a part of his travelling-stock.

Boom! boom! boo! buzz-z-z-z-oom! There is that astounding humming again, and I am determined to find out what it is before I go to dinner. Following the sound as well as I am able, I discover its source at last upon the edge of the common, where a portion of land next the town has been partitioned off. Upon two of the cross-beams of a stout gate, the musician, who is a man in a clean short smock-frock, wearing a jaunty cap and top-boots, has fastened, by means of iron staples driven into the beams, a row of about twenty poles of green wood, which I take for ash. The poles are about two inches in diameter, and of unequal length, diminishing regularly from the longest to the shortest, like a row of pipes in an organ. Each pole is fastened to both bars of the gate by a strong staple driven firmly home, but yet not so far but that the poles may be shifted by a smart blow on their lower ends. A multitude of chips are lying on the ground beneath, and I gather from that that the poles have been tuned by means of a knife and a mallet—the knife being used to cut a flat note sharper, and a touch of the mallet beneath serving to lengthen by shifting, and thus to flatten, one that was too sharp. The instrument is attached to the establishment of a conjuror of the old school, who swallows flames and vomits yards of ribbon, &c.; and it is played upon by a couple of heavy padded hammers, with which the performer thumps with all his might upon the poles, striking them within an inch of their point of contact with the topmost beam. It is their vibration against this beam that occasions the abominable buzz which half drowns their music; but the most remarkable thing in regard to this nondescript instrument, is the odd fact, that the further off you go, the better you hear it, provided you do not go out of hearing. When standing close to the performer, the booming tones, which at the distance of a furlong fill the whole air, are not heard at all, though the melody is heard in a succession of staccato taps, which again are inaudible at a point where the bass tones become audible.

On returning to the inn for dinner, I find the rosy-faced dairy-maid whom Farmer Armstrong has engaged,

already there, and waiting with her luggage to accompany us back to the lodge. She has, wisely, no predilections for the joys of the fiddling-booths and nonsense exhibitions, now in full swing, and gladly accepted the farmer's proposition that she should enter at once on her duties. The room in which we all dine together looks out upon the rear of one of the theatrical establishments, where an interior performance is reiterated three times in the hour, while a constant performance of a much more burdensome nature is maintained upon the platform in front. All are busy as bees in a hive; and to us it is a hive of glass, for we can see all that goes forward behind the scenes. The manager is here, and there, and everywhere, in a moment; and as all goes on well, carries a smile of satisfaction on his countenance. But suddenly there is a roar of applause from the rival show on the other side of the common, and the mob of outsiders, rushing off to see what is the new wonder, leave our friend half frantic at the unlooked-for defeat.

Enter Manager (to his company) in a state of desperation.—'That villin Sniggins has started the Statties! We must do the same, or immortal smash is the word. Which on yer can do the Statties? (*A general silence.*) What! are we to be done brown by Sniggins? We, that have been fust chalk at Overtopping for thirty year? Who can do the Statties? Who can do the Statties, I say? Is there ne'er a begaboo among the whole lot on yer as can do the Statties?' And as he roars out these inquiries in frantic accents, the unfortunate man writhes dramatically, grasps his forehead with both hands, and begins tearing his hair in terrible tragic fashion. (*Still there is no response.*) 'Then I'll tell 'ee what it is,' he screams out; 'it's all up with us; we are all cracked, smashed, ruined, flabbergasted, flummoxed, spificated—that ever I should live to say them words—gammoned, diddled, walked into, and dead-beat and done brown by Sniggins! O tenpenny! O Noses! Shay-oss is come agin!'

'No it ain't! Gosh if it is!' says a stalwart fellow, grimy with lampblack and grease. 'I'll do the Statties afore it comes to that—blow'd if I don't!'

'You, Noggins! You're a trum, by Jove! Step out, my brick. Crieke! it's all right; you're bigger by half than the Sniggins rascal. Go it, my jewel; let's see how you do it. Now, then, for Herkils!'

Here Noggins grasps a birch-broom, and brandishing it over his head, seizes an imaginary lion with one hand, and threatens to brain him with the other.

'Stunnin', by Evins!' roars the delighted manager.

'Now, then, for Haypoller.'

Immediately the broom becomes a bow, and the tall fellow, drawing himself up to his full height, is seen launching the arrow, his eye steadfastly fixed on the distant quarry.

'Gloaryus! that's a splendid hit! Now, then, for the Dyin' Gladdiayer.'

The Gladiator gives equal satisfaction; so does his victorious slayer; so does Napoleon, who is always impressed as a statty in these exhibitions; and so do various ambiguous personifications, which may serve for anything you like.

'It's all right!' roars the manager. 'Now then, Bardy, for the tight's.' (Bardy is a ragged factotum, who responds immediately to the call.) 'Here's a half sov—up into town to Tape's—you know Noggins's size—get a pair o' white cotton socks, a pair o' drawers ditto, and a tight-fittin' shirt to match. Here's the tin! Cut, you devil, like the wind—and mind the change—d'ye hear!'

Bardy is off like an arrow from a bow. Noggins is busy at the pump, washing the grease from his face and hands. Mrs Melter, the matron, produces her needle and thread, ready to stitch up Noggins in his new skin as soon as it arrives; and a child is despatched to the baker's for a pennyworth of flour,

to whiten his face with when all is ready—the classical Noggins having a conscientious objection to rub chalk into his eyes for the sake of saving a copper. No time is lost: the broom, by the addition of a fragment of hayband and a few strips of white canvas, is converted into a ponderous club, quite statuesque in appearance. Bardy comes back, as the manager declares, 'in a jiffy'; and Noggins, retiring for two minutes into a stable, re-appears in his novel integuments, in which, in less than five minutes more, he is comfortably sewed up by a couple of the sisterhood, during which process he flours his face and the whole mass of his bushy hair, till his entire man is as white as a statue new from the chisel of the sculptor. The manager, who for the last few minutes has been ramming down a double charge into a huge blunderbuss, borrowed from our landlord, now leads him forward, and we see no more of him. But in a few moments we hear the stunning report of the blunderbuss, followed by the bray of all the speaking-trumpets they can muster—a modest appeal to the fickle multitude, which soon produces the desired effect; for we hear, as we sit at dinner, overpowering proof that the *vox populi* has returned to its allegiance, and that the devoted Noggins has redeemed the character of the old and favourite establishment.

Dinner done, and the farmer having no further business to transact at Overtopping, we set forth, while it is yet early, on our return to the lodge. The Mop naturally forms the subject of conversation as we ride along, with Patty the new dairy-maid, with her luggage, on the hinder seat. The farmer acknowledges readily enough that the Mop is a silly, and, upon the whole, perhaps a demoralising affair, but not so bad as I am disposed to think it may be. Though much like other fairs, he says it differs from them materially, inasmuch as it is rarely, if ever, attended by gamblers or sharpers; for the good and sufficient reason, that it does not offer the prospect of booty to attract them. Dicers, garter-prickers, thimble-riggers, gipsies, and professional rogues of all sorts, avoid the Mop as a losing speculation; and the arena is left to those exhibitors who have simply amusement to offer, or the means of gratifying curiosity. The fiddling-booths are the worst feature of the whole; and as these are kept open to a late hour, consequences that may be guessed not unfrequently ensue.

The day fixed by statute for the Mop is the first market-day after the 29th of September; but there is always a supplementary Mop held on the same spot exactly a fortnight after the Mop proper. This, however, is a tame affair, attended by none of the noisy demonstrations or pleasurable elements of the former. It is quite indispensable, though, under present arrangements; because it always happens that many of the engagements made at the Mop are found unsatisfactory from some cause or other. It may be that a master is deceived in the qualities, or capacities, or character of a servant, and must get rid of him; it may be that a servant is deceived as to the work to be done, or the comforts to be enjoyed, and determines to leave his place; and it may be, and sometimes is the case, that a stout vagabond, having received earnest-money, declines to shew his face to his employer, but marches off out of the district, to return no more. In any of these cases, or in fifty others that might be specified, the supplementary Mop affords an opportunity of correcting the errors or defalcations of the first; but after this, there is no remedy of this public kind until the year comes round again. Masters know this, and servants know it too, and they act accordingly; and therefore an engagement can hardly be looked upon as binding till the fortnight of trial has passed: if it last beyond the fortnight, it is very likely to last the year.

Regarding the Mop as an institution, we do not think that there is much to be said in its favour, and we are glad to observe that for many years past its popularity

has been much on the wane. Doubtless, it has had its uses; but we are pretty confident that its total abolition would tend, both in a moral and pecuniary sense, to the advantage of the servants, inasmuch as the absence of any such certain and facile means of hiring and being hired would operate to cement the union between employers and employed, by necessitating on both sides the practice of bearing and forbearing, and by inculcating on both sides, too, a more just appreciation of the value of character.

STEAM-VESSEL DISASTERS.

THE number of large steam-vessels lost during the year now drawing to a close, has exceeded that of any former year. The *City of Glasgow*, utterly lost in crossing the Atlantic. The *Humboldt*, wrecked in going into Halifax harbour. The *Franklin*, wrecked on the coast of Long Island. The *City of Philadelphia*, wrecked on the shores of Newfoundland. The *Arctic*, destroyed by collision in a fog near the same fatal coast. The *Forerunner*, lost near Madeira. The *Yankee Blade*, wrecked shortly after leaving San Francisco. Such are the principal losses of large steamers, independently of many losses of sailing-craft and steam-vessels of lesser size and importance, all with passengers on board.

Of all these losses, the newspapers of the day have said perhaps enough, and it is painful to recur to the subject. We think, however, it may be of use to express what is the general feeling respecting these disasters: it is, that, with one exception, they were all apparently the result of carelessness on the part of the respective commanders. Setting aside the case of the *City of Glasgow*, of which nothing is known, there remain six great wrecks; and of these, five were caused by the vessels running heedlessly on shore. Now, with a proper knowledge of the coast, and a good reckoning, not one of these disasters, so far as we can understand, would have occurred. Take the case of the *City of Philadelphia*. It suddenly strikes upon a sunken rock, near Cape Race, in Newfoundland; and being damaged, has to be run ashore at the nearest available point, where the passengers are fortunately landed and saved. The question every one asks is, why the vessel was allowed to get so near the coast of Newfoundland without the knowledge of those on board? All at once, and when nobody is expecting such a thing, a shock is felt, which spreads consternation through the ship. Of course, there can be but one explanation of the calamity—the captain had not kept a sufficiently correct reckoning, and did not know where he was. He did not imagine that he was so near land; but we apprehend that it will be a general impression, that he should have taken pains to assure himself of the true position of his ship.

The notice of this disaster reminds us forcibly of the very admirable management on board the Cunard Steamers, by which the writer of these observations went to and returned from America, both times under the charge of Captain Shannon. In going out, the captain said one evening to the passengers: 'You will see the light-house on Cape Race to-morrow morning at six o'clock.' And so exact had been the reckoning, that next morning, accordingly, precisely at six o'clock, the light-house came in sight, a number of the passengers having risen from their beds to see this first indication of America. The correctness of Captain Shannon's prognostication affords a fine

example of good seamanship. On returning across the Atlantic, he equally surprised and delighted his passengers by the accuracy of his observation. On Sunday, 25th of December, a day dull and chilly, the captain walking on the poop, in answer to inquiries about seeing land, said that at four o'clock in the afternoon, just when sitting down to dinner, the passengers would get a glimpse of the mountains of Ireland. And true enough, when the dishes were carrying into the saloon, and we were arranging ourselves for dinner, there did the rugged hills of Ireland make their appearance through the clouds which hung on the distant horizon.

The explanation of this marvellous exactness is the care taken to measure the ship's run by log, to take observations when practicable, and watch the ordinary phenomena of the ocean. Captains differ considerably as regards these duties. Some, feeling their responsibility, are punctilious in keeping a watchful outlook. Others, comparatively indifferent, will be seen to spend not a little of their time in playing cards with the passengers. When near the coast, a prudent captain is doubly anxious for the safety of his ship, more particularly after nightfall. If he goes below at such times, it is only for a short space, and for necessary refreshment or repose. He does not, when in a dangerous channel, take a hand at whist, or otherwise amuse himself in the saloon. A good captain, indeed, will usually be found to be rather reserved to his passengers; the truth being, that he is thoughtful and nervously anxious that all should go well with his ship.

It is trite to observe, that the best men will at times be mistaken—human judgment is prone to error; and it is pretty clear that no man of high standing will consent to act as a drudge, and be everlastingly doing the duty of a subaltern. What, however, we have a right to expect is, that steam-vessels of a large class shall not be handed over to pretenders—men who consult their own ease, and who are destitute of resolution to encounter the difficulties of their profession. It is undeniable that carelessness is the principal cause of shipwrecks. The accounts of recent disasters make it appear, that in several instances there was extreme ignorance and presumption. From the published examinations respecting the loss of the *Forerunner*, it seems that the captain of that ill-fated vessel was remonstrated with for keeping so near the shore. He was warned of his danger, yet he persisted in his course, and ran the ship on a reef of rock, which, by a reasonable degree of caution, and by consulting the charts, he might have avoided. The details of this shipwreck are positively shocking. The vessel suddenly strikes with a crash, and soon heels over and goes down. No pains taken to order out and regulate admission to the boats. Individual selfishness and chance are left to govern everything. Some scramble into the boats; some are picked up in the water; the vessel, in sinking, is seen to have nineteen persons on deck, who are instantly engulfed in the remorseless ocean. But for the noble conduct of Governor Kennedy, who was on board, and gave some sensible orders in the midst of the general panic, it seems tolerably evident that not one human being would have been saved. The vessel, it seems, had been nearly wrecked, by running on a sandbank, on leaving Africa; and putting this circumstance to that of the final catastrophe, the Naval Commissioners who presided at the official inquiry came to this conclusion: 'Considering how frequently he [the captain] has, by his misconduct, perilled the vessel and the lives of the several persons embarked in her, and being impressed most forcibly with his culpable abandonment of his post and of his authority as captain

of the vessel in the hour of danger, and at a moment when the preservation of discipline and order was especially required, we are of opinion that he is, from incompetency, unfit to discharge the duties of a master of any British merchant-vessel.'

Ignorance and presumption in the first place, and want of presence of mind in the second, appear to be the usual failings of these ship-captains. Getting into a dilemma by their neglect and self-conceit, they do not know what to do when promptitude and decision are required. Instead of standing at their post, and issuing distinct orders suitable to the occasion, they get demented, allow all discipline to disappear, leave passengers to shift for themselves; and if any are saved, it is by the mercy of Providence—no thanks to these fair-weather commanders, who are only fit for parading in uniforms, and ought never to have been put in places of trust and responsibility.

The loss of the *Arctic* presents some remarkable and melancholy features. At noon, in the finest possible weather, there happens to be a fog, and it is at a part of the ocean where passing vessels may be looked for. No bells are rung, or other sounds made to warn off approaching ships. The speed of the *Arctic*, twelve miles an hour, is not relaxed; the vessel, in fact, is kept driving onward through an opaque mist, reckless of all consequences. In an instant it is brought into collision with another steamer. There ensues great commotion on board. But the captain, to whom all should look in this hour of peril, is said to have got bewildered, perhaps in consequence of the absence of his chief officer, and the insubordination of his crew. At all events, no order appears to have been preserved, and the usual scramble for life takes place—the strongest getting into the boats, and the weakest being left to perish. What followed, it is needless to relate.

Besides the negligence of captains, another deplorable feature has been brought to light by these shipwrecks. We allude to the cowardice and selfishness of the crews. Regardless of all sense of duty and humanity, and seeing that their commander has either deserted them or become useless, they think only of saving their own precious lives, and going off with as much plunder as they can conveniently carry. In several instances, the firemen have set the example of insubordination and relentless cruelty. In the case of the *Arctic*, cowardice in the firemen was particularly conspicuous; but their conduct, on the whole, was not worse than that of a fireman belonging to the *Forerunner*. A witness mentions that this fireman took possession of a boat to save himself and his clothes. These clothes were in several bags, and occupied the space which should have been given to some of the passengers. When the witness got into the boat, and began heaving the bags overboard, in order to make room for persons from the wreck, the fireman was indignant at the loss of his miserable luggage, and was only quieted by a threat of being pitched overboard after it.

The coarse brutality of the firemen of the *Arctic* and *Forerunner*, is capped by the villainy of a band of wretches on board the *Yankee Blade*. This large vessel, with 800 passengers on board, shortly after leaving San Francisco, having in the usual manner been run too close in-shore during a fog, and pitched on a rock, the captain shoves off in one of the first boats, to look, it is said, for a landing-place. A number of the passengers gets ashore in other boats; but many are drowned in the attempt to save themselves, and for a large body of the passengers there are no boats at all. Huddled together, and deluged by the surf, hundreds sit despairingly all night on deck, expecting every moment that the quivering hulk would go to pieces. At this crisis, and from the time the ship struck, a horrible scene was enacting in a part of the vessel, which had been taken possession of by a

crowd of desperadoes. 'No sooner had the ship struck,' says an eye-witness, 'than a band of men, armed to the teeth, consisting of notorious shoulder-strikers and ruffians from San Francisco, and a portion of the firemen of the ship, rushed below, and commenced pillaging the baggage. They burst into the state-rooms, ripped open carpet-bags and trunks, plundered them of all the money and valuables they found, and cast the rest aside or overboard. They displayed knives and revolvers, and threatened the lives of all who attempted to interfere with them, or who even made an effort to get at their own baggage. After the rise of the water drove them out of the cabin, they betook themselves to the upper steerage, of which they took complete possession, and commenced a course of wild riot. They got hold of the liquors—many of them drank themselves furiously drunk—ransacked the luggage—obtained a large amount of gold—attacked, beat, cut, and shot all who were in their way—and became, indeed, a band of infuriated fiends. They stationed a guard at the gangway, to prevent the better portion of the passengers from coming down. Some of these attempted to force their way in, when they were cut with knives and bottles, and even their persons robbed of their watches and other valuables. This scene continued nearly all night. Toward midnight, three shots were fired, the lights were instantly extinguished, cries of "Murder!" were heard, and shortly after, at least thirty more shots were fired. There is every reason to believe that several of the passengers were thus murdered.' In the further account of the affair, a strong suspicion is thrown out that the loss of the ship had been contrived by these ruffians, a number of whom had shipped as hands, and others as passengers. However this may be, a fine vessel was wrecked, and 150 lives are said to have been lost; while it may be presumed, that by a reasonable degree of skill and vigilance, the catastrophe might have been prevented.

On the occurrence of a grievous wreck, such as has been alluded to, a sensation is for a short time created in the public mind. There is much pity for the unhappy victims; sermons are perhaps preached to call attention to the uncertainty of human life and all its purposes; and for the most part a variety of suggestions as to boats, and better methods of launching them, are thrown out by the press. Yet, somehow, nothing practically good comes out of the clamour. There is the same routine of indifference with regard to verification of compasses, slinging of boats, keeping a sharp look-out, sounding of signals, and all the rest of it. Is the law to blame? Judicial investigations perhaps take place when lives seem to have been recklessly thrown away, but we never observe that they effect any other object than that of raking up very unpleasant details. The parties really blamable get off with or without reprimand; things go on as before; and people who venture to sea, even in the best class of vessels, are as good as told that they must take the consequences, for the law can do nothing for them. If the captain is pleased to run them on rocks, or send them to the bottom by collision, he, poor man, is not accountable; and the best thing that can be done, is to present him with a piece of plate, in public acknowledgment of his heroism!

The daintiness with which calamities of this kind are treated, is not calculated to inspire respect for what are called constitutional forms of procedure. Still we would not recommend the administration of Lynch Law to the parties concerned, but should prefer seeing some very effective reform in the legalised methods of dealing with them. Railway switch-men and engine-drivers are tried for manslaughter, and we do not understand why ship-captains, who commit blunders which are equally open to challenge, are to be exempted from what seems the natural consequence of their actions. Directing no censures against any particular

individual, we would respectfully represent, that the world is ripe for such measures as will give to passengers in ocean-steamers a reasonable hope of performing their voyage in safety.

M A R E T I M O .

CHAPTER XII.

INCIDENTS OF A CHASE AT SEA; AND HOW THE FILIPPA BEHAVED.

WALTER was not mistaken when, as the felucca, directed by the crew that had betrayed them, came close under the side of the schooner, he spoke encouraging words to Angela. He could not quite explain to himself the reason of his hope; but he confusedly remembered, as something familiar, the long, elegant outline of that vessel. It was, indeed, no other than the *Filippa*—mistaken by the sailors of the *Madonna*, who ought to have known better, for the *Re Ferdinando*—and the two faces that looked eagerly and in surprise over the bulwarks were those of the bluff commander, Giacomo, and Luigi Spada.

A few words interchanged between them and Walter, revealed to the crew of the felucca how deplorably they had erred. The most guilty hid away in the hold; whilst the others crowded round Angela—who stood pressing both hands to her breast, to still the beating of her heart, which struggled violently under all these conflicting emotions—and begged her to intercede for them. They easily earned not only pardon, but reward. All the fugitives, including Josefo and Carlotto, got on board the *Filippa*. The rope of the felucca was thrown off, and the schooner was soon rounding the eastern point of Ischia, in order to get out to sea through the great pass.

Luigi Spada received his guests with prodigious delight; partly, no doubt, because he was really glad that the wife of his friend had escaped, but partly because he could now congratulate himself that his conspiracies, his journeys, his disguises, had not been without success. Of course, he looked upon Walter as a mere subaltern agent; and in order to impress this fact on all present, he hastened to recount how, in a moment of inspiration, he had determined to discharge his cargo at Civita Vecchia immediately on arriving, and pay a passing visit to the bay on his way back. Giacomo might have contradicted him; but the worthy sailor was too much absorbed in simple gratification, and in admiration of Angela, whose countenance looked so pale and sweet in the moonlight, to claim the honour of that suggestion.

'I felt, however,' quoth Luigi, addressing Walter, who was inattentive, because anxious to place his charge in a place of comfort—'I felt a presentiment that I should hear some evil news. No doubt all Naples knows of your doings. You Englishmen are fond of taking direct and noisy means.'

'But we succeed!' cried Walter laughing, as he led Angela away to the cabin, where he had recently passed so unpleasant a night.

'You can sleep and rest in peace here,' he said. 'The most difficult part of our task is performed.'

'The most difficult, signor! Your words warm my heart: but the fifth of June?'

'Trust to us; all will go well.'

'Oh yes, I will trust to you and to your countryman; but—here she lowered her voice—'was it well to take Luigi Spada as a companion? He was my husband's friend, it is true, and will be faithful, no doubt. But they say that no enterprise of his will succeed. And, besides—'

'You seem, madam, to know more of him than you like to say. I beseech you, tell me all.'

'I know nothing—nothing; but have heard strange things. The common people mix his name with stories of the mountain banditti.'

'That is indeed nothing,' said Walter smiling. 'They say that in Sicily robbers are the only honest men. Paolo told me something of these relations. So far, there is no harm.'

Angela, who, despite herself, retained many of the opinions of the family from which she was an outcast, had very prosaic ideas about the banditti of the mountains. She had been accustomed to hear her father speak of them with contempt and aversion; and had often felt gladdened by the thought that her husband had but slightly mixed in intrigues which appear so admirable to a Sicilian, but which, whenever they promise to bloom into action, necessarily bring him into contact with outlaws and professed enemies of society. Indeed, in that country, at the time of which we speak, there existed the last remnants of that family of free spirits which have supplied so many popular heroes to all Europe—the Robin Hoods, the fugitives from oppression, the spoilers of the rich, the defenders of the poor—who are saved from capture, not only by their own courage and dexterity, but by the connivance of a whole population. Under the shadow of their name, however, then, as in all times, many vulgar criminals committed outrages with impunity; and it suited the policy of the government to speak of all as of the same band. No wonder, then, that Angela—brought up in Neapolitan notions, feebly shaken by the romantic representations of her maid Lisa—was with difficulty re-assured by Walter, even though he alleged the authority of her husband.

We have already hinted that the supple-minded Spada—whom nature formed, no doubt, for a diplomatist, and chance made an idle gentleman in an oppressed country—was in relation with all who were discontented or ambitious in Sicily. His fortune enabled him to indulge in the luxury of perpetual conspiracy; and if, from the very nature of his mind, he never terminated his plans in action—professional conspirators rarely strike a blow—he had always shewn infinite ability in evading discovery. The *Filippa*, known to be his property, had often been accused of smuggling—and, if the truth must be told, Giacomo gained his living in no other way—but he always contrived not only to escape conviction, but to prove the highly moral conduct of his vessel on all occasions. He often accompanied it on its trips, he said, because he could not afford a yacht, and was passionately fond of the sea. How, therefore, could the slightest suspicion remain on anybody's mind? He, Luigi Spada, of one of the oldest families in Sicily, nephew of the Bishop of Trapani, a dealer in contraband-goods! Absurd. The fact was, indeed, that he was only an accomplice in knowledge, and left all responsibility on the shoulders of Giacomo. His object was political; and what it was must be told, although it may excite a smile. He looked upon the *Filippa* as the nucleus of the fleet which was to defend the shores of Sicily when he, Luigi Spada, had succeeded in organising his army in the mountains, in getting all the gentry of the country under arms, in expelling the Neapolitan garrisons, and occupying Messina and Palermo.

Had these projects existed only in his own brain, they would have been indeed ludicrous: but we must remember that Sicily had met with a sad disappointment; that her hopes of liberty had been cruelly damped; and that, under various forms, the same conspiracy has been continued, not without remarkable outbreaks, to the present day. In the eyes of Luigi Spada, and of his young friends the Castelnovi, the rescue of Paolo di Falco was a mere episode; and we may be sure, that if they had known how far his private sentiments had obtained the upper-hand—leading him to contemplate flight to a foreign country with his bride, instead of acceptance, with a whole year of accumulated vengeance in his breast, of a distinguished position as leader in the approaching insurrection—

we may be sure the party would not have wasted its strength, or risked discovery, in his behalf.

Walter had already, to a certain extent, understood the character of his accomplices. The hints of Angela completely enlightened him. He did not share her repugnance to make use of such aids; but he felt that it would be necessary to watch carefully, lest in search of some visionary public object the private interests of his friends should be sacrificed. As to the general question of conspiracy and insurrection, we are ashamed to say that he made this rapid reflection: 'I had thoughts of fraternising with the Klefs, why should I not fraternise with the patriotic bandits of Sicily?' Then a boyish idea came to him. How that inexplicable Bianca would be astonished at his exploits! Here he checked himself with a contemptuous smile; for Bianca necessarily belonged to the opposite party. If she was a Ghibelline, why should he wilfully become a Guelph?

The conversation with Angela, which led to these reflections, was broken by several pauses. Walter was about to put some questions on a matter of personal interest to himself, on which he had not yet dared to speak—though nothing would have appeared more natural—when an unusual bustle overhead attracted their attention. Angela, awake to every sound that seemed to threaten danger, begged him to go and see what had happened, and followed him to the top of the ladder in her eagerness. The moon was shining brightly on the crisp sea, and the mountain-islands on either hand. It was easy to understand what was the matter, and why the sailors, with short, eager cheers, were hauling up more canvas, whilst Giacomo shouted his orders. A large vessel under full sail was ploughing the sea in their wake, not more than a mile behind.

'We are pursued!' cried Walter, joining Mr Buck, who stood with Luigi near the steersman, gazing aft anxiously.

'The *Re Ferdinando* has hailed us; perhaps warned by the felucca, which we ought to have sunk,' was the reply.

'And what answer have we given?'

Luigi pointed to the immense spread of canvas, under which the *Filippa* leaned over and quivered as she dashed through the foaming waters.

A pale red flash in the bright moonlight, and a puff of smoke from the bows of the *Re Ferdinando*, brought a warning-cry from Giacomo. An instant after, there was a splash in the water alongside, and Carlotto declared that he saw something round and black go leaping along from wave to wave.

'I know the qualities of my vessel,' said Luigi calmly, 'we are gaining one yard out of three as it is. Even if the mainsail be riddled, we shall still contrive to edge away; but if we lose a mast, we must strike or go down.'

'That was better,' exclaimed Mr Buck, commenting on the effect of another ball, that was heard to strike the side of the vessel, and indeed ploughed a trough as big as a man's arm.

The crew began evidently to feel uneasy; but Luigi and Giacomo explained that they were already nearly out of range, as the shots were no doubt aimed at the masts. Their calculation proved to be correct; for the next ball, somewhat long in coming, smote the water many hundred yards behind, and struck the hull near the rudder.

'We shall have to go into dock, that is all,' quoth Luigi, whose pride and real courage enabled him to assume the ease and coolness of an old admiral. This was the first incident of the kind that had happened in his life, and he felt how important it was that his demeanour should be equal to his ambition. As soon as the pursuer was fairly distanced, this conduct brought its reward; and Luigi heard with intense

gratification the compliments of his rough crew, who were too natural to conceal that they had been terribly afraid.

Walter, in the excitement of the chase, had forgotten Angela. He found her kneeling at the foot of the ladder, praying for the safety of the ship and of her friends.

'You must all be miserly of your lives,' said she; 'for what happiness can I expect, if a drop of blood be spilt on my account? Except,' she added, smiling faintly when assured that there was no fresh danger, 'what has been already spilt without harm.'

Then she inquired about Walter's wound, which was still bound with her handkerchief, and spoke so anxiously, that he knew she feared the reproach of ingratitude for having forgotten it. Every word she uttered expressed her affectionate character, and heightened the fraternal sentiment which a vague belief in her relationship to Bianca, as much, perhaps, as his friendship for Paolo, had created for her in Walter's heart.

It was some hours before the *Re Ferdinando* disappeared in the distance. Meanwhile, a sort of council of war was held. Their position was not yet very safe. If the chase had been undertaken at the suggestion of the felucca, the enemy knew that their destination was Palermo. It would be madness, therefore, to risk the *Filippa* in the bay, or indeed any where in sight of the sea-highway from Naples. The question was, what were they to do during the fortnight that was still to elapse before the 5th of June? They had no further preparations to make. The *Filippa* was to start from some port a few days before the time of the rendezvous, and keep out to sea within reach of *Maretime*. Walter, who had a single object in view, recommended that they should at once steer for Sardinia. But this was too simple a plan to meet with the approval of Luigi. His objections also were ingenious, and seemed solid. They had no passports, and might be detained. There was time for their arrival to become known at Naples, and all their projects might thus be nullified.

'But,' said Walter, disposed to be suspicious of all proposals that came from his too clever friend, 'what do you advise us to do?'

'We can make the shore at Torre del Capitano, where Giacomo has acquaintances. They will shew you to a place of safety for a couple of days. Remain quiet there. Meanwhile, having no suspicious cargo on board, the *Filippa* can go to Palermo; and even if the *Re Ferdinando* be there, I defy her to claim acquaintance. As soon as I get on shore, I will either come and join you, or send some persons who will take you to a more comfortable hiding-place. Fear nothing. All true Sicilians are your friends; and the police will never hear of your presence, until Paolo sends them a letter announcing his departure from *Maretime*.'

For many reasons Walter thought proper to acquiesce in this plan, although not without some uneasiness, lest, as soon as they touched Sicilian ground, the force of circumstances should involve them all in very widespread intrigues. He saw that Luigi was triumphant, and that a strange smile flitted across his countenance in the pale half light of the dawn, which had stolen unnoticed over the sea that rolled in cold green waves around; but he trusted much in his own energy and straightforward good-will to break through all obstacles, whether they came from friends or foes.

The wind had shifted towards morning, and now blew almost from due south. We shall not describe the details of their navigation, during which no incident of mark occurred. They had made a splendid run during the first night; but it was not until towards evening of the second day that they found themselves on a level with Ustica—the highlands of Sicily lying like a bank of vapour along the southern horizon, with

a speck of white, that seemed a cloud, far away to the left, never moving—the gigantic peak of Etna, shining towards the western sun. With these landmarks in view, they took an easterly course, but lay-to several hours in the course of the night. By next dawn, they were becalmed a mile or so off the vast rocky promontory, on the point of which a ruinous-looking building bears the name of the Torre del Capitano, for a reason which, no doubt, there is a legend to explain. On either hand, the coast, abrupt and lofty, stretched away in great curves, without much sign of cultivation, although the telescope passed along the water's edge could discern several white hamlets, built at the openings of gorges leading up into the mountains.

The sea, at first opaque, became more and more transparent as morning brightened; and soon thousands of medusæ, like floating flowers, could be distinguished blooming in the crystal waters from unknown depths. Walter, who had gone below to sleep, found Mr Buck pacing the deck, with his jovial cheeks warmed by the slanting rays of the sun, but trying to look pensive. He was thinking, he said, of the forlorn condition of Messrs Thompson, Pulci, & Co.; of the melancholy loneliness of Lina; of his little cutter, which was probably confiscated by this time; and of all the beauties of the bay.

'I call this a vulgar bit of coast,' said he, looking contemptuously at Sicily, which Walter was admiring. 'No shape, no proportion, no meaning: mere rocks piled on rocks, with a tree stuck here and there, an old tower by mere accident; and a sheet of water to reflect the whole, just because there happens to be a bright sky. Don't talk to me of this being picturesque!'

Walter judged that his friend wanted his breakfast. He therefore agreed with him provisionally.

'By the way,' he added artfully, 'I am glad to find you alone, Mr Buck; what is your opinion of the plan we are following?'

'It seems a very good one, so far as I can judge. But we have got into strange company. You never told me that these excellent gentry, who treat us so hospitably, were once on the point of giving you an uncomfortable bath. I learned that matter yesterday; and have never passed one of the ruffians since without a gracious grin. Then this Giacomo is a jolly fellow, certainly; but what else is he? Why, sir, he is a smuggler—and boasts of it. We are going to do a little business together, true; but that does not increase my pleasure at finding myself on board his vessel. As to Mr Spada, he's an enigma; but I can understand one thing: he lays prodigious stress on getting Angela—I mean Madame di Falco—ashore in Sicily; and I somehow fancy he has some diabolical scheme in his head.'

'Well, we must keep our eyes open,' replied Walter. 'I think he is disposed to act fairly, but with ulterior views. They may be good, but I am not inclined to engage in them in ignorance of what they are.'

'And, *per Bacco*! I am not disposed to engage in them at all. As soon as I see this young couple united, I shall buy a carpet-bag, and some respectable fittings, have a clean shave, and return to my crib in defiance of all the police in the world.'

A boat from the *Filippa* had gone ashore before dawn, and soon came rowing back over the lucent water, drops of liquid light scattering as it were from the oars as they rose regularly to the measured chant of the crew. All was reported right on shore; and presently, therefore, the party that was to leave the vessel—Angela, Walter, Mr Buck, and Josefo, for Carlotta had been persuaded to join the smuggling crew—were collected on the deck. Luigi Spada iterated his instructions to wait patiently until a messenger came from Palermo, and addressed a courteous and really sympathetic speech to Angela, promising to risk life and liberty for her husband; Giacomo

joined his crew, who had been won to enthusiasm by the gentle manners and beauty of Angela, in shouting a vigorous *addio*, with a variety of pious blessings; and presently Walter, not without pleasure, found himself once more ostensibly commander-in-chief of the expedition.

They had been consigned, however, to the care of a little old man, who seemed disposed to talk rather arbitrarily of what they were to do. The crew of the boat addressed him with profound respect, which induced Walter to think his appearance worth studying. He was thin and long-nosed, pale and beardless, with a blue and white cap set on the back of his bald head; a red shirt, and loose, striped trousers, bound round the loins with a brilliant sash of many colours. Despite the lack of shoes and stockings, he was evidently a man in comfortable circumstances. Signor Spada had told him, he said, that his guests were to keep at home all the daytime, or at anyrate were not to wander about the country; that they were not to depart until special orders arrived; and that they were always to be ready to start at a moment's notice.

'Almost prisoners,' said Mr Buck in English to Walter.

The old man, whom everybody called Pipo, answered in the same language, that names and things were very different; but so it was, and so it should be. Then he amused them by an account of his service on board the English fleet; and asked Walter if he knew a Mrs Jones, who lived at Wapping. A negative answer surprised him.

The men, meanwhile, pulled industriously; and the boat, gradually verging round the eastern head of the promontory, suddenly entered a blue little haven, with a blue sky overhead, and all surrounded with broken precipices, tinted green and yellow with various kinds of lichens, whilst between them, as if planted carelessly by nature, were clumps of orange-trees covered with golden fruit. To the right, a vast rock, almost entirely clothed with ivy and other creepers, rose in a succession of terraces to the foot of the tower that gives its name to the promontory; and a little further in, near a piece of clear beach, with some boats pulled up here and there, were a couple of ruinous-looking houses. They landed in front of them in a few minutes, five or six stout young men being ready to carry the passengers through the shallow water. Immediately afterwards the boat pulled away, and Signor Pipo led the way to his house, which Mr Buck persisted in calling a prison, but of which he did the honours in truly aristocratic style. The young men, two of whom were married, and occupied the adjoining dwelling-place, were introduced as 'honest' fishermen—Pipo smiled when he said 'honest'—but it was evident that this was a smuggling station; and if the police had made a descent that very moment, they would have found a dozen bales or so piled in the ground-floor-chamber without any attempt at disguise.

Although Angela had by this time grown pretty well accustomed to her male attire, she was evidently marvellously relieved at finding some women, however humble, with whom she could spend her time. In less than an hour after their arrival, Walter found her covered with a large black mantilla, for which she had struck a bargain, taking lessons in spinning from the dark-eyed Katerina, one of Pipo's daughters-in-law. She seemed happy in thus reasserting her feminine character: 'My thoughts are less wild and anxious,' she said, 'whilst my fingers are occupied.'

Mr Buck, impatient to ascertain whether he was a freeman or not, after wandering with his hands in his pockets up and down the beach for a few minutes, resolutely took the direction of a long flight of steps, that zigzagged up the face of the rock in the direction of the tower. He had scarcely put his foot on the first

step, when Jacopo, a huge fellow, eldest son of Pipo, placed himself, with a prodigious smile that seemed to disclose a double complement of teeth, in his way. It would be very fatiguing, he observed, to climb that rock. Mr Buck averred that his legs were stout—a proposition that Jacopo had no intention of denying; but he was evidently quite resolved to dispute the passage. The worthy Englishman became as red as a boy 'kept in' at school for bad-behaviour, clenched his fists, and set his teeth; but Jacopo's smile did not relax, and he felt it would be unwise to strike him.

'Decidedly, Mr Masterton,' exclaimed he savagely, returning to where Walter was preparing to enjoy a nap in one of the boats drawn up on the sand—'decidedly we are prisoners.'

'We must take matters as they come,' replied Walter, endeavouring to bring his companion to the same philosophical mood with himself; for he felt that resistance in the actual position of affairs would be both foolish and useless. His mind, however, was not unoccupied. There remained but a dozen days for the completion of their undertaking; and he was resolved, that if Spada shewed any hesitation, he would act by himself, be the consequence what it might.

The day passed slowly by in this state of inaction. There lacked about two hours to sunset, when that quiet little nook seemed suddenly galvanised into excitement. Pipo's sons went running past the house towards the steps leading to the tower, and a voice falling from an immense height could be heard hailing them. Walter made out a man standing on the edge of the precipice far above.

'We, too, have a right to know what is the matter,' exclaimed he; and followed by Mr Buck, began also to scale the steps. There was no one to oppose them, and they soon arrived breathless at the summit, and joined the group of smugglers, who noticed not their coming, but all gazed out towards the west at a scene which seemed to interest them deeply. As soon as—partly from what they saw, partly from the exclamations of Pipo and his sons—the two Englishmen understood what was taking place, they, too, felt as if all their hopes were to be extinguished ere the sun went down.

The *Filippa* was again chased by a large vessel, supposed to be the *Re Ferdinando*; but without the same chance of escape as in the open sea. She was steering, with all sails set as before, within a mile of the rocky shore; whilst the enemy, much further out, but nearly on a level, and evidently with the advantage of a fresher breeze, seemed to make quite sure of catching her ere she could round the promontory.

Walter thought the case was desperate, especially since every cable's length brought the *Filippa's* head more round to the wind as she followed the curve of the shore; but Pipo seemed not quite to have abandoned all hope. 'Giacomo is there—Giacomo is there!' murmured he, in answer to the despairing exclamations of his sons.

'They will cross her in the pass,' cried Jacopo.

'Perhaps not,' said Pipo.

Walter now, for the first time, noticed that the two vessels were separated by a long line of breakers, extending from within a few hundred yards of the extreme point of the promontory far along the coast—further than he could see; and he was not long in understanding upon what manœuvre Pipo based his hopes. Apparently with a purpose, the *Filippa* had slackened her speed as she neared the pass, and allowed the *Re Ferdinando*, distant above a mile out at sea, to draw considerably ahead. The sailors on board the enemy could be seen crowding along the bulwarks, probably quite certain of their prey. But suddenly Pipo shouted: 'I knew it—I knew it!'

The *Filippa*, which was almost within hail many hundred feet below, seemed for a moment a confused

mass of fluttering canvas. She put about with admirable rapidity; and receiving the favourable breeze in her immense spread of sail, went swiftly gliding back by the way she had come. The *Re Ferdinando*, taken by surprise, performed a similar manœuvre, more slowly and more clumsily; and by the time she had steadily resumed the chase again, had lost at least half a mile.

'Hurra!' cried Mr Buck; 'she is safe.'

'We must not be too sure of that,' said Pipo, shaking his head. 'The trick was finely done—quite worthy of Giacomo; but whether he can get out to sea through the other pass, this old man—pointing to himself—has his doubts.'

The sun was by this time shining fiercely in a glowing sky above the western horizon; and the waters, through which the *Filippa* ploughed, were all speckled with golden spots of light. By degrees she grew smaller and dimmer; and when at length the sun set, was only a speck at the other extremity of the great curve or bay. She had not, however, maintained her reputation for speed. The *Re Ferdinando*, being further out, had a better breeze probably, and no fear of sunken rocks. She was now, at any rate, near enough to fire a shot, for a faint boom came across the waters. Another, and another followed. Walter's eye had grown dim with fatigue. The *Filippa* more than once escaped from his gaze. At length he could not find her at all; though there, most distinctly, was the *Re Ferdinando*, moving like a small shadow in the twilight towards the shore. 'I have stared till I am half-blind,' said he.

'No,' replied Pipo solemnly; 'the *Filippa* has gone down. May the Holy Virgin smile with mercy on the souls of those who were on board!'

As he uttered these words, the old man bent his knees upon the rock, and all his sons imitated his example. There was still sufficient light on that lofty place—although the sea looked dim and vapoury, and darkness had gathered in the haven below—for Walter and his companion to distinguish the deeply pious expression which had come over the faces of Pipo's sturdy and uncouth family; and it was rather from an irresistible sympathy, than from any motives of policy, that they, too, knelt at the foot of the old tower on that wind-beaten promontory, and prayed for the souls of all those who might have perished with the unfortunate *Filippa*.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THOUGH war is the absorbing topic, our learned and scientific societies re-opened their sittings with something like the usual gentle excitement among the savans and philosophers who make up the weekly gatherings. In some few instances there is a little departure from the even tenor of the way of science, by eager endeavours to press experimental knowledge into the service of war—endeavours of which we are to hear more by and by; but for the most part, our scientific men are pursuing their accustomed course. The anniversary meeting of the Royal Society on St Andrew's Day was more than usually interesting, as the Earl of Rosse delivered his last annual address to the assembled Fellows, and resigned his office of president, greatly to their regret. Indeed, his lordship's withdrawal from the chair is regarded as a loss by the whole scientific community. He closed his presidency with a worthy distribution of the medals, which rank the highest among scientific honours. The two Royal Medals were adjudged to Doctors Hoffmann and Hooker—to the one, for his researches in organic chemistry; to the other, for his botanical investigations and discoveries. The award of the Rumford

Medal has universal approval: it was given to Dr Arnott, for his smokeless grate and his important improvements in heating and ventilation. We are the more gratified in recording this recognition of the doctor's services, as he has always made a free gift to the public of his discoveries. They are being recognised in another way by Lord Palmerston: he has had the smokeless grate fixed in a number of the government offices, where they are found to answer admirably. After this, we can but hope the Home Secretary will continue his prosecution of the smoke-producers until the atmosphere of London shall be de-fulginated. But to conclude our remarks on the Royal Society: the Copley Medal is awarded to Professor Johann Müller of Berlin, for his researches in physiology and comparative anatomy; Professor Stokes, of Cambridge, is elected one of the secretaries—a fact on which the Fellows may congratulate themselves—and Lord Wrottesley takes the place of the Earl of Rosse. We could wish to stop here; but the loss to the society by the decease of such men as Wallich, Newport, Professor Edward Forbes, to say nothing of many others, is too serious to be passed over without this mention.

The calculating-machine we noticed in a few words last month, turns out to be a more complete and important instrument than was at first believed. The inventor, Mr Scheutz of Stockholm, has, in conjunction with his son, brought it to perfection after twenty years' continuous labour, the younger of the two having first conceived the idea from reading an article on Mr Babbage's invention in the *Edinburgh Review*. The Swedish machine will calculate the powers of bi-quadratic equations, the logarithms for falling bodies from different heights, for projectile forces, tables of sines, &c.—and all by the slow motion of a winch turned by hand. And what is more, it stereotypes the columns of figures after having calculated them. In all previous machines, the carryings have proved a hitch; but in this of Mr Scheutz, the movements experience no check, so beautifully are the several parts combined. It occupies rather more space than a cabinet pianoforte, and can be made for £200. Mr Babbage's cost the public about £17,000, and was never finished.

Admirably ingenious as this calculating-machine is, we do not see that its manufacture for sale is likely to be profitable; for who will buy it? One or two in each of our largest cities would suffice to calculate all the tables that actuaries, public companies, or astronomers, are ever likely to want. But in saying this, let us not be supposed to depreciate the invention, which is certainly a most remarkable piece of mechanism, and highly honourable to the constructors.

Mr Dobell has called the attention of the Royal Society to gelatine paper as a medium for colouring light, likely to be useful in many employments, and in cases of weak sight. This kind of paper, which was first invented at Rouen in 1829, is now produced in great perfection; it is highly transparent, and in sheets measuring sixteen inches by twenty-two, but can be made, if required, of the dimensions of the largest plate-glass. These sheets, moistened with a solution of gelatine, may be stuck on the panes of a window, and thus change the light admitted to any required colour. A green light, falling on the white silk made up by dress-makers, deprives it of all its painful glare; in the same way, yellow silk is made to appear green by a blue light, as has been proved by actual experiment, and it is attended with the happiest effects. Jewellers who have tried the green paper, say that when once accustomed to working in a coloured light, they find it greatly relieves their eyes. In reading, too, a sheet of the green paper laid on the page preserves weak eyes from being injured by the strong contrast of black and white, and enables many to read with comfort who have been hitherto obliged by too susceptible vision

to abstain from books. Other applications of gelatine paper naturally suggest themselves: it may be used as screens and shades for many purposes; the glasses of spectacles may be coated with it; gardeners may use it in their conservatories; and the yellow will probably be taken into their service by photographers. By the addition of a small quantity of acetate of alumina during the process of manufacture, the gelatine paper becomes weather-proof, just as linen or woollen cloth is rendered waterproof by the same chemical substance. Before passing from this subject, we may add that zinc white paper, a recent adaptation, is coming more and more into use, being found particularly suitable for copper-plate engravings and lithographs, as also for memorandum-books. Oxide of zinc seems likely to have a wider application.

We mentioned, some months ago, the offer by the Agricultural Society of a £1000 prize for 'a manure equal in fertilising properties to Peruvian guano,' to sell at £5 a ton, and be forthcoming in any quantity: 143 competitors have answered the call, and from other countries as well as the United Kingdom. However, before making the award, the Council of the Agriculturals intend to test the compounds sent in with scrupulous care, so as to protect the members from all chance of fraud or error. Professor Way reports more adulterated manures in the market now than ever; some specimens of guano advertised as 'genuine' which he has tested, contain rather less than one-fourth of real guano; all the rest is rubbish in disguise. In their list of prizes for 1855, the Society offer forty sovereigns for the best essay 'On the Causes of Fertility and Barrenness in Soils,' twenty sovereigns for the best 'On Artificial Manures, and the Principles of their Application,' twenty 'For the best Account of Artificial Food,' and twenty for the best 'On the Prevention of Mildew in Corn Crops.' These subjects, which are in addition to the series on farming in counties, indicate the mode in which agriculture seeks to profit by science; and it is in this relation that we call attention to them. The present condition of political affairs is such as to make the supply-of-food question especially interesting.

In this view, we may fitly say a few words here about the Chinese yams, on which for some few months past careful experiments have been made in the garden of the Horticultural Society at Chiswick. Some are grown under glass, others in the open air, and so far with favourable results. These roots were sent over from the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, and as they have long been cultivated in China, it is believed they will more readily take to their new situation than yams, and that they may thus become a valuable substitute for, or supplement to, the potato. M. Decaisne says, in reporting on the plant to the Académie, it has been 'domesticated from time immemorial; is perfectly hardy in this climate [Paris]; its root is bulky, rich in nutritive matter, eatable in the raw state, easily cooked, either by boiling or roasting, and has no flavour but that of fecula. It is as much a ready-made bread as the potato, and is superior to the *batatas*, or sweet potato.' The plants under cultivation at Chiswick are of the species known as *Dioscorea batatas*, or potato yam; they grow with vigorous runners, which have some resemblance to our common black bryony. We have no wish to see people content themselves with yams instead of bread; but as adding to the ordinary supplies of food, we do wish success to the Horticultural Society's experiments on yams.

The prospect of increased silk-culture, which we have mentioned more than once, becomes still more promising. Sir William Reid, governor of Malta, states in a dispatch to the Colonial Office, that the silk-worm, *Bombyx cynthia*, introduced from Assam, is

now acclimated and thriving, and he sends specimens of its silk. Already the eggs have multiplied so as to allow of distribution: the Agricultural Society of Grenada, West Indies, have asked for a supply, and are going to try them; and in Piedmont the new worms have proved themselves as productive and industrious as in their native country. Signor Griseri, and some of the nobility, have met with such success with the Assamese worm, that they are now experimenting on the native Italian grubs which feed on the leaves of the willow and lettuce. 'Where is the limit to be placed,' observes the *Turin Gazette*, when 'the object is nothing less than to convert the vegetable matter of the most common leaves into the valuable substance of silk?'

The great fact in relation to this new *Bombyx* is, that its food is the castor-oil plant, *Palma christi*, and not the mulberry, and that plant can be produced in warm countries in any quantity. Our allies on the other side of the Channel are busying themselves with it; they have naturalised the worm at Algiers, and find it to be one that keeps them fully employed, for the eggs are hatched very soon after they are laid, and the second generation of worms comes into work in about nine weeks, and so on all the year round. Owing to the cocoons having a hole in the end by which the grub escapes, the silk cannot be reeled off in the usual way, but is stripped off and carded. A trial is to be made in Algiers as to whether an acre of mulberry or an acre of the castor-oil plant is the more profitable: the latter produces leaves in abundance. The Museum of Natural History at Paris is distributing eggs of the new silk-worm to any sericulturists willing to give it a trial. Talking of cocoons, those recently described by M. Guérin Méneville throw all others into the shade. One or two specimens have been sent to him from Madagascar, which are nearly two feet in length, spun not by a single individual, but a whole colony of worms. And this is not the only surprising gift to European naturalists from the great African island; for the shell of an egg laid by one of its gigantic birds has been received: it holds nearly ten quarts!

As if to prepare for the promised increase, experiments have been made on the preparation of silk at Manchester, from which the conclusion is come to, that it would be better to import silk in cocoons, than in hanks and bales as at present. The saving in cost and labour would be considerable, for there is much to be undone in imported silk before it can be made ready for reeling; while the new machinery reels off and produces a thread ready for the weaver at one operation.

The Photographic Society are making arrangements for another exhibition, to be held in January, when they hope to shew satisfactory advancement in the artistic as well as the mechanical branch of their art—the one by copies from nature, the other by copies from negatives. That life-size portraits can now be taken, and that a legible copy of the *Times* can be produced on a plate but little more than two inches square, are certainly demonstrations of progress. The *Paper versus Collodion* question is not yet settled; nor the discussion terminated on the possibility of producing coloured pictures. Becquerel still maintains his views, and pursues his researches. The Boston (Massachusetts) Society of Natural History have had photographs taken of an interesting slab impressed with the fossil footmarks of extinct birds, and are distributing them among naturalists, to whom they will be more valuable than any hand-drawing, as when examined by the microscope, every mark is as distinctly seen as in the original slab, so perfectly does the sun bring out even the minutest particulars. Then, we see that gutta-percha has been successfully used as a mould in the electrotype process: an engraver at Paris having to engrave a physical map of Spain in seven divisions, prepared

one plate, from which he took moulds in gutta-percha, and on these the electrotpe plates were deposited in ten days, and at one-third of the ordinary expense. Gutta-percha, too, is much used now in the manufacture of what are called *bronzes d'art*.

Two more small planets have been discovered by the French astronomers, and added to the already numerous list by the names of Pomona and Polhymnia; and the Washington Observatory has made its first planetary discovery in Euphrosyne, another of the same group. This makes up the number to thirty-four; and there is every reason to believe that more will yet be found, seeing that science is continually availing herself of new aids and appliances. M. Bernard, of Bordeaux, has invented a new polarimeter, which, by a remarkably ingenious contrivance, enables the observer to note the polarisation of the atmosphere with greater exactitude than by any other instrument used for the purpose, and to measure with ease and certainty the amount of polarised light contained in any given ray. He has also constructed a refractometer and a photometer, which, as well as the other, have excited the admiration of the most distinguished physicists of Europe. Solar light, when examined by means of these instruments, is found to be simple and not multiple, as some have believed—the prismatic spectrum not being composed of superposed rays. Thus, the highest theories of optics are illustrated by contrivances beautifully simple.

Many persons will remember the discussion that took place after the burning of the noble steam-ship *Amazon* at sea, concerning the use of steam in extinguishing fire: vapour of water was shewn to be more effectual in accomplishing the object than water itself. It gives us pleasure to be able to tell of a practical result. In France, the *Préfet du Nord* has issued an order to all the distilleries within his department, requiring them to be provided with flexible tubes and pipes communicating with the boiler, so that in case of fire a jet of steam may be at once directed on the flames in whatever part of the building they break out. We should be glad to see the example followed in large manufacturing establishments in this country.

Among the 'subjects for premiums' just published by the Institution of Civil Engineers, we find—'An Inquiry into the Causes which have hitherto prevented the asserted High Speeds of Steam-navigation on the American Rivers from being arrived at in England;' 'The best Methods of reducing the Temperature of the Engine and Boiler Room of Steam-vessels, and of preventing the Danger arising from the Overheating of the Base of the Funnel;' 'Improvements in the Manufacture of Iron for Rails and Wheel Tyres;' 'Improvements in the Construction of Railway Carriages and Wagons, with a view to the Reduction of the Gross Weight of Passenger-trains;' 'The Drainage and Sewerage of Large Towns;' 'Improvements in the System of Lighting by Gas.' The list, from which these instances are taken, comprises forty-nine subjects, all of the same practical and useful nature—all contributory to national welfare. Let those who are able try their best, for never was there a time when such services could be more acceptable.

A method of discovering leaks in gas-pipes deserves to be noticed: the tap at the main being closely shut, air is to be forced in at the other end by means of a small condensing-pump, until it is heard wheezing or whistling as it escapes from the faulty place in the pipe, and thus indicates where repair is wanted. An individual at Rochester, state of New York, converts iron ore 'directly into steel' by heating to a white heat in a retort, and then treating it in the usual way. Another in Pennsylvania has invented what he calls a 'self-waiting dining-table,' which by means of an endless band, kept in motion underneath the table by any power applied to the crank, moves a number of 'guiding

carriers' on the table top, and keeps them constantly going up one side and down the other with all the dishes, castors, decanters, &c., that may be required. The great hotels, where some three or four hundred sit down to dinner, should try it.

The Greek fire, or an equivalent, is revived. M. Blanche, an industrious chemist of Puteaux, near Paris, has discovered a liquid which, flung on water, blazes furiously, and with intense heat, for five minutes. Being of a dense quality, it does not spread immediately, but confines its energy to one place. He has another liquid to fire straw and similar combustibles by a mere sprinkling, and which, if thrown on a floor mingled with water, instantly produces suffocating vapours; or when mixed up with a certain powder, explodes violently at the end of fifteen minutes. The French government are considering whether these compounds can be employed in the war.

Apropos of the war: as a good deal has been said about the climate of the Crimea, we may observe that, in Professor Dove's isothermal maps, the line of equal winter cold for January passes through Stockholm and the Crimean country a little to the north of Perekop. Our army may, therefore, have to endure the temperature of a Swedish winter; and that is quite cold enough.

INDIAN LIFE IN CANTONMENT.

I HAVE no thrilling adventures or startling incidents to relate; nothing but the details of our everyday life, which, thanks to good government, and the pacific character of the natives in these parts, is quiet enough. Our last dispatches would tell you of our 'flitting.' We were just beginning to settle down comfortably in our new bungalow at V—, and had got everything nice about us. We had been walking in the garden, admiring the growth of our pease, and congratulating ourselves—short-sighted mortals as we are—on being at last in a home of our own, after all our ups and downs. I had just gone in to put on my bonnet for our evening drive, and the carriage was at the door, when in rushed D—in a state of excitement, with a 'circular' from the colonel in his hand, saying: 'We are ordered off to Cuttack forthwith.' What a surprise! However, a soldier must always be ready for the march, and so must a soldier's wife. Military life in India is more of a pilgrimage than anything else. We never rest long at one station. Such bustle and confusion there was in our little cantonment the next few days, I could scarcely describe to you. Furniture packing; hackeries, bullocks, and coolies bespeaking; bearers hiring; and all the numberless arrangements required for a long march—for we had 400 miles to travel before reaching our new station. Well, within a week of the order, we were all *en route*, bag and baggage.

This being my first march with the regiment, it had all the charm of novelty, and I really enjoyed it. The season was cool, and the mornings and evenings particularly agreeable. I travelled in my palanquin; D— rode. Perhaps you would like to know how we got on? Very early in the morning, long before dawn, the sound of the bugle rouses the camp, and the hum of voices is heard from the *sepoys'* lines. A cup of coffee is always ready before starting. Then on we go—ten, twelve, or fourteen miles—to the next halting-place, where the tents are pitched. An encampment is a very pretty sight, particularly when the scenery around is picturesque: the white tents gleaming among the foliage of the banyan, mango, and tamarind trees, and a large tank or pond close by. These tanks are an invariable adjunct to a good halting-place, and are often exceedingly pretty, with long flights of steps leading to the water. We generally remained in our tents during the day, till three o'clock, when we all assembled in the mess-tent for dinner—officers and ladies, I mean. In the evening,

we formed parties for walking, and exploring any pretty spot in the neighbourhood, and then often met at each other's tents for tea and a chat, 'camp fashion,' which being interpreted, means each one bringing his own chair, cup and saucer, knife and plate, &c.; for in travelling, no one encumbers himself with more things than are absolutely necessary for number one. I was really sorry when our pleasant journey was over; but we were all delighted with the appearance of our new station. D— and I went to a friend's house, till we could secure one of our own. The quarters of officers are not, with us, as with European regiments, portioned out to each officer; but all are at liberty to choose their own abode, only keeping within the cantonment, and frequently the youngest ensign has a larger and better bungalow than his colonel.

There was a good deal of good-humoured competition for the best houses; but at last everything was agreeably arranged, and we found ourselves installed in a most comfortable bungalow. They are very different here from what we had been accustomed to: the roof is thatched with straw, and slopes down very low, forming the veranda, which runs all round the house. This shades the rooms very pleasantly. Cuttack is a very neat-looking cantonment, not unlike an English village, the bungalows being ranged in a line, on either side of a good broad road. They each stand in a compound—our Indian lawn—separated by hedges from their neighbours. We have a garden attached to our bungalow, opening from the back veranda by a short flight of steps; at the foot, is a hedge of the magnificent cactus, or prickly pear, which would be so much prized in a hot-house at home; it was covered with white blossoms this morning when I went out early. I never saw anything more beautiful, and the perfume was almost overpowering. The bees seemed to think it as sweet as I did, for they were buzzing lovingly among the flowers. These, however, are so delicate, the heat of the sun soon makes them droop. The little garden is stocked with the most delicious mignonette, roses, verbena, and heliotrope, to say nothing of the Indian flowers, which are gorgeous in their colouring, though the double jessamine is the only fragrant one among them: it is pure white, and much prized by the natives as offerings to their gods. I have one small plant of English honeysuckle, which I watch over with great care; but I fear it is pining for its native soil, as it does not thrive well here. The exquisite *Horgba Carnosa*, or honey-plant, grows in great luxuriance and beauty.

We have oranges, limes, shaddocks, plantains, guavas, pine-apples, and custard-apples; two peach-trees, from which we expect a few dozen peaches; and one fig-tree, which latter, however, does not look thriving. They require more care and better cultivation than the native gardeners are able to give them. We have several English vegetables just now, peas, cauliflowers, turnips, carrots, &c.; but they leave us with the cold weather. I was tempted the other morning, during a solitary walk, by the appearance of the fruit of the prickly pear, which resembles a large purple plum; but I think this must have been the 'forbidden fruit,' so fatal to Mother Eve, for although wholesome and refreshing, it is covered with almost invisible prickles, which tormented my mouth the whole day.

January.—How do you think we pass our Christmas in the 'glowing East,' so pleasant a season at home? It is not a merry time with us here, but we try to make it as social as possible. This last Christmas-day I was up before the sun, and gathered such a bouquet of flowers, as I am sure you could not boast of in Scotland. On returning to the bungalow, we found wreaths of flowers hanging in all directions, over every doorway and window, round the punkas, and twining round the pillars of the veranda. On the breakfast-table were presents of cakes, plantains, and oranges; and these

kept pouring in all day. Natives, however, have rather curious ideas of a gift; for I remember on one occasion, a servant presented us with a cake, and on looking over the accounts shortly after, I found among the items, 'Present to master—one cake, one rupee!' The day passed much as usual; there were a good many visitors; and the salutation, 'A merry Christmas to you,' was often heard, though it sounded rather incongruous, and was echoed by many a sigh. In the evening, I strolled about the garden and compound, and then went to dress for the Christmas dinner at the mess-house, where we were all to meet at half-past seven o'clock—the usual Indian dinner-hour. There was a large party, every one in the station being invited. We sat down, between thirty and forty, to the sound of *O the Roast Beef of Old England*, played by our band. The mess-house was beautifully decorated with flags and arms, well arranged, and intermingled with wreaths of flowers, forming really an imposing sight. The dinner was as English as roast-beef, mince-pies, and plum-pudding could make it; but how different the scene from what is presented in England! The punkas swinging over our heads; doors and windows wide open; and black faces, in long white robes, attending! After dinner the band played, and the music continued during the whole evening. There was dancing in one room, and some of the gay ones kept it up to a late hour; but we, being among the sober set, retired early, and so ended our Christmas-day. According to regimental custom, our band played the old year out and the new year in. They march through the whole cantonment, playing for an hour or more. The music has a solemn and not unpleasant sound in the stillness of the night; some of the airs cannot but touch the chord of memory.

We have a number of missionaries here, most excellent people, who do much good, and also a chaplain from the Bengal government. The church is cool and comfortable; there are three punkas going all the time of service, and our band plays the psalm tunes. Everything in a military cantonment is done to the sound of the bugle: we get up in the morning, go to dinner and to church, at bugle-blow. It sounds for the last time at eight o'clock in the evening, and after that the sepoy is not allowed to quit their lines without leave, and every one passing the sentries is challenged. It is pleasant to hear this challenge on a still, quiet night, in returning from dining out, or spending the evening with a friend. The 'Who goes there?' of the sentry; the response, 'Friend!' and then the rejoinder, 'Pass, friend—all's well!' and the clank of the musket as the sentry recovers arms, have to me a charming and musical sound.

I must tell you of a fright I got the other night in D—'s absence. I was awakened in the middle of the night by a heavy breathing close to my bed, and starting up in alarm, was by no means reassured when I saw a huge figure within a yard of my bed. My light and the ayah were both in the next room; and on calling out for them, I discovered that the intruder, who stood quite still, was no other than a large Brahmin bull, which, finding some door open, had walked in to have a peep at the interior. Having gratified his curiosity, he walked off, composedly enough, the way he came in, making some remarks to himself in a few snorts and grunts. These Brahmin bulls are the pest of our cantonment. They are privileged creatures, and go where they like; they are held sacred by the natives, and no one dare destroy them. A gentleman killed one here a few years ago, and the Brahmins rose en masse, and demanded justice. The prejudices of the natives being much humoured by the government, the unlucky bull-destroyer had to pay a heavy fine. At Juggernaut, that stronghold of Indian priestcraft, neither cow, calf, nor bull is allowed to be killed; so that beef is there an unknown commodity.

The pilgrims who resort to Juggernaut pass through

this station in thousands; many of them die on the road from starvation and fatigue. There is a pilgrim hospital here, supported by government, where these poor creatures may find relief, and be enabled to pursue their way. Rice is given to all who will receive it; but many refuse to eat what is not cooked by one of their own caste. I have seen the poorest beggar refuse a loaf of bread. Some, you may have heard, more infatuated than others, think to reap a richer reward by measuring their length on the ground, every inch of their journey, which perhaps is hundreds of miles. This I once witnessed myself, and the sight of the poor creature, covered with dust, worn out and emaciated to a shadow, left a most painful impression on my mind.

We went down to the Bazaar this morning, to see the manufacture of the silver ornaments for which this place is celebrated, and which were so much admired at the Great Exhibition. It is, indeed, wonderful to see the jewellers sitting on the ground in their little huts, fashioning those light and delicate silver roses, with their awkward-looking instruments. Their supple fingers and long nails seem to do as much service as their tools. A dish of heated charcoal stands by them, which they frequently apply to. These native workmen can copy and imitate most exactly, but have no inventive genius.

July.—The 'hot season,' truly so called, is now over for the present year, and the rains fairly set in, which enables me to resume my pen. Description can give you very little idea of the intense heat we have experienced. We have been existing, but not living to any purpose. From sunrise to sunset, our rooms were closed to every breath of air from without, which was like that of a heated furnace. Within doors, punkas and *thermantidotes* kept us alive, with the assistance of pale ale, cooled by means of saltpetre; for we are too far inland to indulge in the luxury of ice. We used to long for sunset as you do for a sun-shiny day, for we were scarcely able to breathe freely till the fiery orb sunk below the horizon; then doors and windows were thrown open, and we ventured out into the veranda to enjoy the sea-breeze, which comes from a distance of forty miles. Some few dreadful days we had when there was no sea-breeze, nothing but the hot sand-winds day and night, making the air scorch even after sunset. You need not envy us our Indian summer: winter, it might in one respect with more propriety be called, for vegetation seems at a stand-still, and every blade of grass withers. There was something very oppressive in the perfect stillness of these hot days. One longed for some sound to break the deathlike repose: all nature seemed asleep; and it was not till the shades of evening began to fall, that the animal world seemed to awake; and then, to be sure, they did their best to atone for their unwonted silence! This has been an unusually hot season, the natives say: several coolies have been struck dead in crossing the dry bed of the river; and a large flock of monkeys, which came down in search of water, perished on the burning sands.

The rains commenced about the middle of June, heralded by dust-storms, and by dreadful thunder and lightning. The crash of these thunder-storms is terrific, and yet magnificent. The air is now cool and pleasant; all nature has revived, and looks green and smiling. We sit in the veranda frequently, watching the river, which is rapidly rising, and will soon fill its basin. The boats begin to ferry across, which is a very amusing sight. They are large and clumsy things; sometimes two are fastened together, crowded with natives, bullocks, and bullock-carts. We had a pretty walk this morning to the Old Fort, which was once a place of considerable strength, but is now going to ruin. It is surrounded by the remains of a lofty wall, and a deep ditch, swarming with alligators.

I do not think you would enjoy living on our free-and-easy terms with animated nature. The sparrows

build their nests in the drawing-room, and the crows hop on to the breakfast-table, and help themselves to bread. Dozens of frogs are squatted behind doors, and in every available corner, where they remain during the heat of the day; at night, they hop out to their nocturnal concert, always returning at day-dawn. Musk-rats flit about from room to room, uttering, if alarmed, a shrill squeak. Centipedes are to be found in the damp corners of the bathing-rooms, and occasionally a cobra di capella pays a visit to one's bedroom. There was one killed in mine a short time ago. But these formidable inmates do not cause me nearly so much annoyance as the ants and mosquitoes, which there is no possibility of destroying. The ants are particularly troublesome, as everything eatable has to be guarded from their attacks by placing the feet of tables and presses in dishes of water. The veranda has its inhabitants too. Owls and bats take refuge in its corners during the day, and fly out at dusk; and occasionally the chattering minah builds its nest in a quiet corner. The active little lizard is always on the alert, watching for its prey. They destroy mosquitoes, and are consequently great friends of mine. The Brahmince lizard is a beautiful little creature, exquisitely marked with shades of gray, and a red tail. It is very timid, and seldom seen. I wonder if my young friends at home have ever read an account of the mason-wasp. We have numbers of them here, and I have often amused myself lately with watching them. The insect is not unlike our wasp in shape—the same long body and slender waist, but of a pale-brown colour, instead of yellow and black livery. It first selects some spot for its nest—very often the side of a chair or couch, the edge of a book or picture, or some ornament on the table that takes its fancy. Then it brings to this spot little balls of earth, and begins to build. Its nest, when finished, is about the size of a thrush's egg: a small opening is left, and the eggs deposited. Then Mrs Wasp flies off, and returns with a living green caterpillar, which she intombs in this house of hers. Out and in she goes till about a dozen of these unfortunate victims are secured within. Then the hole is filled up, and neatly plastered over; and no one would guess, to look at this little knob of earth, that living caterpillars are pent within. It is supposed they are to serve as food for the young when they come out of the egg.

October.—We have just returned from a visit to a curious old place, eighteen miles from this, which I think you will like to hear about. D—— had obtained leave of absence for ten days during the Dusserah, a Hindoo festival, which we thought could not be better employed than in visiting the ancient remains of Bhubanesswar, or 'Land of God.' Accordingly, we entered our palanquins' one fine morning at three o'clock. We passed through the bazaar, and soon found ourselves on the banks of the river, which we crossed in a large flat-bottomed boat. Such a piece of business it was getting our palanquins into the boats, and such a Babel of voices! Once fairly on the road, on we went very quickly. On approaching Bhubanesswar, the scene became every moment more singular. Ruins and temples met the eye at every turn, half hidden by the thick jungle. On reaching our tents, which had been sent on the day previous, and leaving the palanquin, I was struck mute with astonishment at the scene before me. It seemed as if I had been set down in the midst of ancient Babylon. But how shall I describe it? It is almost impossible to convey by writing an adequate idea of the view. Wherever the eye rested, there were temples; and the difficult thing is to give you a true picture of these temples. Your fancy may already have conjured up Grecian architecture, marble pillars, and so forth; but not so is the Hindoo temple. Exquisite as is the carving, there is nothing classic about its exterior. On the

contrary, the only thing I can think of comparing it to in form is an inverted jelly-glass. A sort of rude porch in front is the invariable entrance, ascended by steps, and guarded on each side by the figure of a lion or a griffin. Our tents were pitched on a rising-ground, among some ruins, and facing the 'Bidu Sagur,' a magnificent ruined tank, surrounded by large and small temples or pagodas. Mounds of earth, and massive stone-work in all directions, seemed to indicate that the place must have been at some early period an immense city. According to the traditions of the natives, these temples, 999 in number, were built before the time of our Saviour by a great rajah, who ruled the land.

It is very pleasant living in tents in the cool season. We found it warm during the day, but the nights were always agreeable. We used to hear the growling of bears around us at night, the sharp cry of the hyæna, and the howl of the jackal; but although these animals might have entered the tent at their pleasure, we never felt alarmed. Our only protection was a little terrier-dog, and a light always burning inside. The natives said that tigers were often seen, and carried off many of their bullocks. We used to rise early and take long walks and rides. The morning air was peculiarly fresh and delightful; and there was so much shade, we could remain a long time out before feeling the sun too powerful. We came upon many beautiful spots, where, I believe, European feet had never before trodden. Every now and then, a ruin, half hidden among the thick foliage, came suddenly on our view; some of the small tanks were very picturesque; they were covered with the sacred lotus, of which there are many varieties—the pure white, with its yellow calyx; the bright red; and prettiest of all, those tinged with pale pink, like a soft blush on a pure cheek. They look most lovely among their broad green leaves floating on the dark and quiet water. Wherever we went, we saw temples in various stages of decay, but each one seemed more beautiful than its neighbour, so diversified and wonderful were the architecture and carving.

The large tank opposite our tents was lighted up at night, which had an extremely pretty effect. It was very pleasant to sit in the evening at the door of the tent, watching these lights dancing up and down, and reflected in the calm water; and by moonlight the scene was really beautiful. I love to dwell on these days. The life we led was so primitive—so truly enjoyable—that we were quite sorry when our little holiday ended, and we were obliged to return to head-quarters, and bid adieu to this wonderful and interesting spot.

LONDON.

Oh it was such a dream by daylight—such a dream, and yet so true! All was so little, and I was still the same! All the streets were millions of dolls' houses; and along the streets little specks, moving—moving, sometimes in twos and threes, and then altogether, in one long, black, gliding thread. And then the cattle and the horses! I felt that I could take up the biggest of them, like shrew-mice, in my fingers—look at 'em, and set 'em down again. And then the smoke! the beautiful smoke! Oh in millions of silver feathers it came from the chimneys up and up; and then somehow joined in one large shining sheet; and went floating, floating, over houses and church-steeples, with hundreds of golden weathercocks glittering, glittering through! And then the river and the ships! The twisting water, shining like glass! And the poles of the ships, as close, and straight, and sharp, as rushes in a pond! And then, far off, the hills, the dear green hills; with such a stir below, and they so beautiful and still, as though they never heard, and never cared for the noise of London—a noise, that when we listened, hummed from below; hummed for all the world like a hundred humble-bees, all making honey, and all upon one bush!—*Jerrold's Heart of Gold.*

AMONG THE TOMBS.

'Ci rivedremo!'

'I THINK I never saw this place so fair'—
For, entering, a sea of sunshine pale
Rolled over us, and breaking on the edge
Of an October rain-cloud, wide spread
In a great flood o'er all the land of graves.

'Look—those far headstones! How they seem to move
Like lambs upon June meadows; or snow-sails
Each scattered on the black main like a smile;
Or groups of white-clad children, suddenly
Upstarting in a sunny moor at play:
You would not think this was a field of graves?'

Ah no! for with our footsteps entered Life—
Life, staggering underneath her burden sore;
Life, thrilling with strange touches on her heart;
Life, with her sad eyes looking up to God;
Life, with her warm hands clinging still to man;
Life, blindfold, wondering, gay, despairing, glad,
Gazing at Death with a soft ignorant smile,
That said: 'What doest thou here?'

Ay, what doest here

Thou Terror—thou Divider? We'll the sun
Walk meekly, saying unto Care: 'Go to!
Thou art but one—we two'; and unto Pain,
'God loves all those who suffer, doing no wrong;
And Time, the equal-handed, levels all.'

Therefore, O Life, that laugh'st beside these tombs,
Hiding behind the splendours grim of Death,
As a child hides behind a murderer's robe;
Therefore, O Death, that throwest thy garment cool
And wide over this Life, who maniac-wild
Runs to and fro, and wrings her bleeding hands;
O Life, the healer, sanctifier of Death,
O Death, which art Life's end, and aim, and crown,
Here be ye reconciled, like parted friends,
Who, shrinking, feared to meet each other's brows,
And read 'Foe' written there. Gaze long and calm,
Like those who, gazing, know no possible hand
Save that which looses all things, e'er can bind
Them closer. And gaze tenderly, as those
Who through all chance, all change of place or time,
All glory, all dishonour, all delight,
And all despair, walk constant night and day
Each in the other's shadow—face to face—
Waiting the supreme hour that makes of both
(Life merged in Death, and Death in Life divine)
An indivisible and perfect One,
Married for ever.

NOTABILIA OF PORTARLINGTON.

We learned two things before leaving Portarlington. One was, that Sterne's Le Fevre, whom he introduces with features of such pathos and beauty into the pages of his *Tristram Shandy*, was son to a Mr Le Fevre, a descendant of a settler here under the Marquis de Rouvigny. This gentleman was over one of the excellent French schools belonging to Portarlington, and actually *had* a son in the army, who died in the manner so affectingly related by Sterne. One other piece of information was, that the old Irish name for Portarlington, before Charles II. gave it to his minion, was Cooletetoodra—yes, actually Cooletetoodra!—alias, and by corruption, said my informant, Cooletetooder! The meaning, or English of this—thanks to my young friend Dryasdust—is, 'the corner surrounded by wood.' A sensible and expressive denomination enough; yet one cannot but smile at what might have been the ridicule cast upon Lord Arlington's Irish property with such a ridiculously-sounding name among the mirth-loving courtiers of Charles II.; and the reason for the change of name is now evident.—*Dublin University Magazine.*

Printed and Published by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 3 Bride's Passage, Fleet Street, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by J. M'GLASSIE, 50 Upper Sackville Street, DUBLIN, and all Booksellers.